

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01
/029 W

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2772

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: OREP, (DERWINSKI, EDWARD J), JO

SUBJ: CODEL DERWINSKI'S TRIP TO JORDAN

SUMMARY: CODEL DERWINSKI ENGAGED IN FRUITFUL SERIES OF MEETINGS DURING ITS THREE-DAY STAY IN AMMAN AUGUST 6-9, MOVING THROUGH EXCEPTIONALLY-CROWDED SCHEDULE WITH EASE. CODEL HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH FELLOW MEMBERS OF INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION, CROWN PRINCE HASSAN, KING HUSSEIN, LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AND AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE EMPLOYEES. HIGHLIGHT OF STOP IN CODEL VIEW WAS TRIP TO SHNELLER REFUGEE CAMP AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH CAMP'S PALESTINIAN LEADERS. END SUMMARY

1. IN ITS FIRST MEETING AUGUST 7, CODEL SPENT HOUR AND HALF WITH PRESIDENT OF SENATE BAHJAT TALHOUNI AND SEVERAL SENATORS WHOM CONGRESSMEN HAD MET DURING IPU MEETINGS. TALHOUNI DESCRIBED CURRENT JORDANIAN POLITICAL POSITION IN CONTEXT OF LATEST ROUND OF SECRETARY VANCE'S PEACE EFFORTS, EMPHASIZING JORDAN'S BELIEF THAT SOLUTION OF PALESTINIAN HOMELAND QUESTION CRUCIAL TO SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM CONGRESSMAN DERWINSKI, TALHOUNI SURMISED THAT LESS THAN 40,000 PALESTINIANS WOULD LEAVE JORDAN TO SETTLE IN EVENTUAL HOMELAND SINCE SO MANY WERE NOW WELL SETTLED IN ADOPTED COUNTRY. (CURRENT EMBASSY VIEW
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IS THAT SOMEWHAT LARGER NUMBER, PERHAPS 1000,000-200,000 UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS MIGHT GO FROM EAST TO WEST BANK.) TALHOUNI EMPHASIZED JORDANIAN SUPPORT FOR POSITIONS OF EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT IN CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN DETERMINATION TO RECONVENE GENEVA MEPC. HE EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASAD WOULD ALSO AGREE TO GO TO GENEVA, COMMENTING THAT ASAD HAD NOT REALLY REJECTED WORKING GROUP IDEA PROPOSED BY SADAT BUT HAD

ONLY REJECTED IDEA OF FORMALIZED MEETINGS BEFORE GENEVA IN FAVOR OF SERIES OF INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS NORMALLY HELD IN CONNECTION WITH ANNUAL UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. SENATORS AND CODEL AGREED THAT PARTIES TO ME CONFLICT SHOULD ALLOW SECRETARY VANCE SUFFICIENT TIME TO BRING PARTIES CLOSER TOGETHER BEFORE RECONVENING MEPC, KEEPING IN MIND THAT MAINTENANCE OF FORWARD MOMENTUM IN THESE PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS OF PEACE CONFERENCE.

2. FOLLOWING TALHOUNI MEETING, CODEL, ACCOMPANIED BY SEVERAL SENATORS, VISITED SHNELLER (MARKA) REFUGEE CAMP. CODEL MET WITH APPROXIMATELY TWO DOZEN CAMP LEADERS, ONE OF WHOM READ LONG STATEMENT WHICH BEGAN BY CONTRASTING DISMAL LIFE IN HUTS OF REFUGEE CAMP WITH ELEGANT HOMES IN WHICH AMERICANS LIVE. THIS HAD COME TO PASS, SPOKESMAN SAID, BECAUSE OF LARGE AMOUNT OF ARMS SUPPLIED BY U.S. TO ISRAEL. THIS HAD ENABLED ISRAELIS TO TAKE AWAY PALESTINIAN LAND AND HOMES. HOPES OF PALESTINIANS HAD BEEN RAISED IN EARLY YEARS BY PROMISES OF HELP BOTH FROM SECRETARY DULLES AND FROM PRESIDENT JOHNSON. BUT PALESTINIANS HAD LEARNED FROM THOSE DISAPPOINTMENTS THAT INTERNAL U.S. PRESSURE GROUPS OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST JUSTICE FOR PALESTINIANS. THEY THEREFORE EXPECTED NOTHING FROM PRESIDENT CARTER, POINTING TO CARTER'S EARLY STATEMENTS SUPPORTING IDEA OF PALESTINIAN HOMELAND AND WHAT THEY PERCEIVED TO BE HIS LATER WITHDRAWAL FROM THIS POSITION.

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3. IN HIS REPLY, CONGRESSMAN DERWINSKI THANKED SPOKESMAN FOR FRANKNESS AND EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT MORE OF HIS CONGRESSIONAL COLLEAGUES SHOULD VISIT PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTANT IMMEDIACY OF PROBLEM. HE TOOK ISSUE WITH SPOKESMAN'S ASSUMPTION THAT INTERNAL PRESSURES IN U.S. WOULD PREVENT PRESIDENT

CARTER FROM MOVING QUICKLY TO TRY TO SOLVE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEMS, NOTING THAT, AS NEWLY-INSTATED PRESIDENT, CARTER HAD TWO-YEAR "GRACE PERIOD" BEFORE HE NEED WORRY ABOUT EFFECT OF LOBBYISTS ON HIS NEXT ELECTION. HE THEN STATED HIS FIRM CONVICTION THAT THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF ANY SOLUTION TO MID-EAST CRISIS IS SETTLEMENT OF PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN JUST MANNER. PREDICTABLY, THIS BROUGHT APPLAUSE AND CHEERS FROM ASSEMBLAGE. CONGRESSMAN CONCLUDED WITH STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BRING PARTIES CLOSER TOGETHER. HE MADE FINAL APPEAL FOR PATIENCE ON PART OF ALL CONCERNED.

4. BEFORE LEAVING CAMP, CODEL WAS TAKEN INTO WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS REPRESENTATIVE REFUGEE HUT TO CHAT WITH ELDERLY CAMP RESIDENT. CONGRESSMAN AGAIN HEARD APPEAL FOR CHANGE IN U.S. STAND ON PALESTINIANS. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD AND SYMPATHIZED WITH PROBLEM AND WOULD CARRY MESSAGE BACK TO HIS CONGRESSIONAL COLLEAGUES.

5. CROWN PRINCE HASSAN RECEIVED CODEL FOR HOUR-LONG BRIEFING ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JORDANIAN ECONOMIC SITUATION AT NOON OF SAME DAY. HASSAN DESCRIBED JORDAN'S PROGRESS IN FIELD OF ECONOMIC PLANNING, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO BASIC DECISION TO CONVERT BASIS OF ECONOMY FROM SERVICE INDUSTRIES TO THOSE GENERATING GREATER REVENUE. CONGRESSMAN DERWINSKI EXPRESSED SPECIAL INTEREST IN JORDAN VALLEY PROJECT AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT HE WOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT PROJECT ON NEXT VISIT.

6. IN SUBSEQUENT SHORT MEETING WITH KING HUSSEIN, THE KING EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SECRETARY VANCE WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN EFFORTS TO BRING PARTIES CLOSER TOGETHER AND THAT GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD BE HELD. KING SAID HE FEARED THAT ISRAELI PM BEGIN WOULD NOT SWAY FROM OFT-STATED HARD-LINE POSITIONS. DERWINSKI COMMENTED THAT HE TOOK MORE OPTIMISTIC VIEW: RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADERSHIP WOULD FORCE MORE FLEXIBLE STANDS THAN HAD BEEN REQUIRED DURING LONG YEARS IN OPPOSITION. DERWINSKI SAID THAT AMERICAN PUBLIC SUPPORTING PRESIDENT IN HIS EFFORTS AND THIS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

7. ON AUGUST 8, CODEL HOSTED GATHERING OF SOME DOZEN AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE PERSONNEL TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL SYSTEM AND PURSUED TOPIC FURTHER IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH LOCAL AFSA REPRESENTATIVE. NATURALLY, POSSIBLE REPEAL OF SECTION 912 DOMINATED THESE SESSIONS. DERWINSKI AND CODEL STAFFERS APPEARED GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC TO CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL. CONGRESSMAN INDICATED THAT GIVEN PRESENT COMPOSITION OF HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE, HE BELIEVES THAT SERIOUS EFFORT ON PART OF SENIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TO PRESENT CASE OF FOREIGN SERVICE TO COMMITTEE LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL. SHORTLY BEFORE, CONGRESSMAN MET WITH AMBASSADOR. BULK OF CONVERSATION COVERED WEST BANK ISSUE AND

PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. AMBASSADOR ALSO DESCRIBED EFFECT OF SECTION 912 REPEAL ON FOREIGN SERVICE, PROBLEM IN PROVIDING ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION ALLOWANCES AND LONG HOURS AND EXTRA OVERTIME PUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN BY OFFICERS AND STAFFS OF OUR EMBASSIES. CONGRESSMAN ALSO INTERESTED IN PURCHASE OF HOUSING VERSUS RENTALS AND IN WISDOM OF IMPROVING OUR ACQUISITION PROGRAM.

8. CODEL MET BRIEFLY WITH LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF AURORA PUMP OF ILLINOIS AND WITH UNRWA REPRESENTATIVE AND ATTENDED WEEKLY KIWANIS CLUB MEETING. CONGRESSMAN ALSO GAVE INTERVIEW TO JORDAN TIMES IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT U.S. ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION WOULD PROBABLY BE CHANGED IF IT PROVED DETRIMENTAL TO U.S. COMPANIES DOING BUSINESS IN ARAB WORLD.
PICKERING

OP NOTE: PLS CORRECT NUMBER IN SECTION 1, PARA 1, LINE 11
TO READ 100,000-200,000 IMI 100,000-200,000

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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